



COMMISSION ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Top Policy Priorities Presented to the Health and Human Service Committee of the County Council October 10, 2019

Presenter: Ms. Kirsten Andersen, Chair

Overview:

The Commission on Children and Youth (CCY) promotes the well-being of Montgomery County's children, youth, and families so that all young people may realize their full potential and become contributing, productive adults. We do this by supporting policy and budget decisions that promote the safety and well-being of children and youth, and by working so that they have access to successful futures.

2019-2020 Commission on Children and Youth Priorities

The Commission will advance its mission in FY 20 through a focus on two priorities:

Priority 1: Strengthening Youth and Law Enforcement Relationships

Recent events in Montgomery County and our surrounding communities have brought greater attention to the relationships between police departments and youth, particularly our youth of color. Recognizing the possibilities of miscommunication and lack of education on youth and authority relationships, the Commission on Children and Youth has selected the topic of "Strengthening Youth and Law Enforcement Relationships" as one of our priority areas for this year. The Commission will focus its work on examining means of educating students, law enforcement, and the community as a whole on the most effective strategies for communication that will help minimize hostile interactions and misunderstandings. At the conclusion of this work, the Commission hopes to offer recommendations on ways to build better relationships and enhance trust between the police, our youth and our communities as a whole. The Commission is also monitoring the progress of the proposed establishment of the Policing Advisory Commission. If Bill 14-19 is passed, the Commission will look to work collaboratively with this commission and share insights and recommendations.

Priority 2: Creating Truly Diverse Schools

The youth of Montgomery County have spoken eloquently and powerfully with the desire to have truly diverse schools, and not just a diverse school system. De Facto segregation is a real and significant problem within Montgomery County Public Schools. Research demonstrates that when students attend diverse schools the academic outcomes are better for all students. This year, the Commission hopes to explore all factors that contribute to de facto segregation and propose recommendations to address this issue.

Additionally, the Commission is hosting its Annual ***Youth Having a Voice*** roundtable event on **Thursday, February 6, 2020**. This will mark the 13th year the Commission has hosted this gathering of teens from across the County to discuss issues that are important in their lives. Not only do youth have the opportunity to speak out, but adults – members of the County Council, Board of Education, HHS senior leadership and others – have the chance to hear, learn, and act on the concerns of the youth.

The Commission is committed to its mission and appreciates your support in our efforts. We look forward to working with you this year. Please feel free to inform us about how we may best support your efforts and partner to benefit the County's children and youth.